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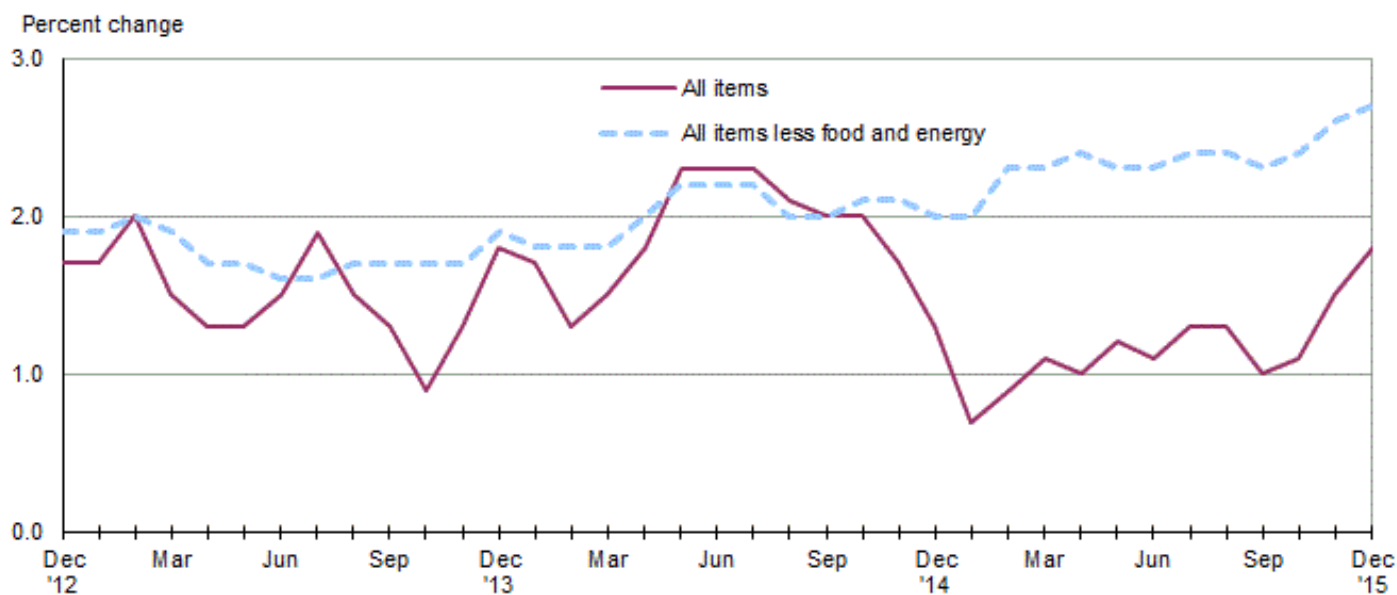
Consumer Price Index, West Region — December 2015

Area prices were down 0.1 percent over the past month, up 1.8 percent from a year ago

Prices in the West Region, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), edged down 0.1 percent in December, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (See [table A.](#)) The December decrease was influenced by lower prices for gasoline and apparel. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, month-to-month changes may reflect seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U rose 1.8 percent. (See [chart 1.](#)) This marks the 14th consecutive month in which consumer prices rose by less than 2.0 percent on an annual basis in the West. Energy prices declined 6.8 percent, largely the result of a decrease in the price of gasoline. The index for all items less food and energy increased 2.7 percent over the year. (See [table 1.](#))

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, West region, December 2012–December 2015



Food

Food prices decreased 0.3 percent for the month of December. (See [table 1](#).) Prices for food at home decreased 0.6 percent, while prices for food away from home edged up 0.2 percent for the same period.

Over the year, food prices increased 1.0 percent. Prices for food away from home rose 3.1 percent since a year ago, but prices for food at home declined 0.4 percent.

Energy

The energy index decreased 1.6 percent over the month. The decrease was mainly due to lower prices for gasoline (-3.0 percent). Prices for electricity decreased 0.5 percent, while prices for natural gas service advanced 1.3 percent for the same period.

Energy prices declined 6.8 percent over the year, largely due to lower prices for gasoline (-11.1 percent). Prices for natural gas service decreased 7.0 percent during the past year, but prices paid for electricity increased 0.7 percent.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy was unchanged in December. Higher prices for household furnishings and operations (0.6 percent) and shelter (0.4 percent) were partially offset by lower prices for apparel (-2.6 percent) and recreation (-0.5 percent).

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy increased 2.7 percent. Components contributing to the increase included shelter (4.4 percent) and medical care (2.9 percent). Partly offsetting the increases was a price decline in apparel (-0.7 percent).

Table A. West Region CPI-U monthly and annual percent changes (not seasonally adjusted)

| Month | 2010 | | 2011 | | 2012 | | 2013 | | 2014 | | 2015 | |
|----------------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| | Monthly | Annual | Monthly | Annual | Monthly | Annual | Monthly | Annual | Monthly | Annual | Monthly | Annual |
| January..... | 0.3 | 1.9 | 0.5 | 1.4 | 0.4 | 2.6 | 0.3 | 1.7 | 0.3 | 1.7 | -0.3 | 0.7 |
| February..... | 0.1 | 1.4 | 0.6 | 1.9 | 0.4 | 2.5 | 0.8 | 2.0 | 0.4 | 1.3 | 0.6 | 0.9 |
| March..... | 0.3 | 1.6 | 0.9 | 2.6 | 0.9 | 2.4 | 0.4 | 1.5 | 0.6 | 1.5 | 0.8 | 1.1 |
| April..... | 0.2 | 1.5 | 0.6 | 3.0 | 0.2 | 2.1 | 0.0 | 1.3 | 0.3 | 1.8 | 0.3 | 1.0 |
| May..... | 0.1 | 1.3 | 0.3 | 3.2 | 0.2 | 2.0 | 0.2 | 1.3 | 0.6 | 2.3 | 0.8 | 1.2 |
| June..... | -0.1 | 0.6 | -0.2 | 3.1 | -0.2 | 2.0 | 0.1 | 1.5 | 0.1 | 2.3 | 0.0 | 1.1 |
| July..... | 0.1 | 0.8 | -0.1 | 2.9 | -0.3 | 1.8 | 0.0 | 1.9 | 0.1 | 2.3 | 0.3 | 1.3 |
| August..... | 0.1 | 0.7 | 0.2 | 3.0 | 0.5 | 2.1 | 0.1 | 1.5 | -0.1 | 2.1 | -0.1 | 1.3 |
| September..... | -0.1 | 0.5 | 0.4 | 3.5 | 0.5 | 2.2 | 0.2 | 1.3 | 0.1 | 2.0 | -0.2 | 1.0 |
| October..... | 0.1 | 0.6 | 0.0 | 3.4 | 0.4 | 2.5 | -0.1 | 0.9 | -0.1 | 2.0 | 0.0 | 1.1 |
| November..... | 0.0 | 0.9 | -0.2 | 3.2 | -0.7 | 1.9 | -0.4 | 1.3 | -0.6 | 1.7 | -0.2 | 1.5 |
| December..... | 0.2 | 1.3 | -0.3 | 2.7 | -0.5 | 1.7 | 0.0 | 1.8 | -0.5 | 1.3 | -0.1 | 1.8 |

The January 2016 Consumer Price Index for the West Region is scheduled to be released on February 19, 2016.

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change in prices over time in a fixed market basket of goods and services. The Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes CPIs for two population groups: (1) a CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) which covers approximately 89 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers 28 percent of the total population. The CPI-U includes, in addition to wage earners and clerical workers, groups such as professional, managerial, and technical workers, the self-employed, short-term workers, the unemployed, and retirees and others not in the labor force.

The CPI is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, and fuels, transportation fares, charges for doctors' and dentists' services, drugs, and the other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. Each month, prices are collected in 87 urban areas across the country from about 6,000 housing units and approximately 24,000 retail establishments--department stores, supermarkets, hospitals, filling stations, and other types of stores and service establishments. All taxes directly associated with the purchase and use of items are included in the index.

The index measures price changes from a designated reference date (1982-84) that equals 100.0. An increase of 16.5 percent, for example, is shown as 116.5. This change can also be expressed in dollars as follows: the price of a base period "market basket" of goods and services in the CPI has risen from \$10 in 1982-84 to \$11.65. For further details see the CPI home page on the Internet at www.bls.gov/cpi and the BLS Handbook of Methods, Chapter 17, The Consumer Price Index, available on the Internet at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/homch17_a.htm.

In calculating the index, price changes for the various items in each location are averaged together with weights that represent their importance in the spending of the appropriate population group. Local data are then combined to obtain a U.S. city average. Because the sample size of a local area is smaller, the local area index is subject to substantially more sampling and other measurement error than the national index. In addition, local indexes are not adjusted for seasonal influences. As a result, local area indexes show greater volatility than the national index, although their long-term trends are quite similar. **NOTE: Area indexes do not measure differences in the level of prices between cities; they only measure the average change in prices for each area since the base period.**

The West Region covered in this release is comprised of the following thirteen states: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

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Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods West (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

| Item and Group | Indexes | | | Percent change from- | | |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | Oct. 2015 | Nov. 2015 | Dec. 2015 | Dec. 2014 | Oct. 2015 | Nov. 2015 |
| Expenditure category | | | | | | |
| All Items..... | 244.341 | 243.749 | 243.434 | 1.8 | -0.4 | -0.1 |
| All items (December 1977=100)..... | 394.963 | 394.007 | 393.498 | | | |
| Food and beverages..... | 252.442 | 251.757 | 251.102 | 1.0 | -0.5 | -0.3 |
| Food..... | 252.711 | 251.951 | 251.300 | 1.0 | -0.6 | -0.3 |
| Food at home..... | 251.638 | 249.920 | 248.480 | -0.4 | -1.3 | -0.6 |
| Food away from home..... | 252.981 | 253.577 | 254.041 | 3.1 | 0.4 | 0.2 |
| Alcoholic beverages..... | 245.569 | 245.827 | 245.138 | 0.6 | -0.2 | -0.3 |
| Housing..... | 257.502 | 257.121 | 258.106 | 3.6 | 0.2 | 0.4 |
| Shelter..... | 291.392 | 292.216 | 293.423 | 4.4 | 0.7 | 0.4 |
| Rent of primary residence ⁽¹⁾ | 305.692 | 307.166 | 308.893 | 4.8 | 1.0 | 0.6 |
| Owners' equiv. rent of residences ^{(1) (2)} | 305.840 | 306.998 | 308.301 | 4.5 | 0.8 | 0.4 |
| Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence ^{(1) (2)} | 305.821 | 306.978 | 308.284 | 4.5 | 0.8 | 0.4 |
| Fuels and utilities..... | 281.656 | 273.243 | 273.085 | 0.3 | -3.0 | -0.1 |
| Household energy..... | 245.478 | 234.637 | 234.451 | -1.5 | -4.5 | -0.1 |
| Energy services ⁽¹⁾ | 247.731 | 236.244 | 236.140 | -1.3 | -4.7 | 0.0 |
| Electricity ⁽¹⁾ | 272.223 | 261.784 | 260.589 | 0.7 | -4.3 | -0.5 |
| Utility (piped) gas service ⁽¹⁾ | 204.989 | 190.266 | 192.761 | -7.0 | -6.0 | 1.3 |
| Household furnishings and operations..... | 129.160 | 128.345 | 129.113 | 0.8 | 0.0 | 0.6 |
| Apparel..... | 121.277 | 118.848 | 115.729 | -0.7 | -4.6 | -2.6 |
| Transportation..... | 198.551 | 197.083 | 195.062 | -1.9 | -1.8 | -1.0 |
| Private transportation..... | 192.229 | 190.213 | 188.654 | -2.1 | -1.9 | -0.8 |
| New and used motor vehicles ⁽³⁾ | 100.417 | 100.159 | 99.778 | 0.4 | -0.6 | -0.4 |
| New vehicles..... | 145.919 | 146.557 | 146.074 | 0.7 | 0.1 | -0.3 |
| New cars and trucks ^{(3) (4)} | 101.336 | 101.779 | 101.454 | 0.6 | 0.1 | -0.3 |
| New cars ⁽⁴⁾ | 145.050 | 145.296 | 144.765 | -0.3 | -0.2 | -0.4 |
| Used cars and trucks..... | 140.675 | 138.050 | 137.111 | -0.4 | -2.5 | -0.7 |
| Motor fuel..... | 214.565 | 205.325 | 199.182 | -11.5 | -7.2 | -3.0 |
| Gasoline (all types)..... | 213.808 | 204.427 | 198.342 | -11.1 | -7.2 | -3.0 |
| Gasoline, unleaded regular ⁽⁴⁾ | 211.165 | 201.794 | 195.732 | -11.6 | -7.3 | -3.0 |
| Gasoline, unleaded midgrade ^{(4) (5)} | 205.851 | 197.104 | 190.802 | -10.0 | -7.3 | -3.2 |
| Gasoline, unleaded premium ⁽⁴⁾ | 210.479 | 201.449 | 196.112 | -9.0 | -6.8 | -2.6 |
| Medical Care..... | 456.524 | 458.708 | 459.224 | 2.9 | 0.6 | 0.1 |
| Medical care commodities..... | 343.522 | 346.064 | 345.408 | 1.4 | 0.5 | -0.2 |
| Medical care services..... | 492.647 | 494.643 | 495.621 | 3.3 | 0.6 | 0.2 |
| Professional services..... | 338.351 | 341.335 | 341.980 | 2.8 | 1.1 | 0.2 |
| Recreation ⁽³⁾ | 111.405 | 111.266 | 110.725 | 1.5 | -0.6 | -0.5 |
| Education and communication ⁽³⁾ | 138.708 | 138.879 | 138.660 | 0.4 | 0.0 | -0.2 |
| Other goods and services..... | 405.842 | 405.941 | 406.063 | 1.7 | 0.1 | 0.0 |
| Commodity and Service Group | | | | | | |
| All Items..... | 244.341 | 243.749 | 243.434 | 1.8 | -0.4 | -0.1 |
| Commodities..... | 179.745 | 178.287 | 177.122 | -0.8 | -1.5 | -0.7 |
| Commodities less food & beverages..... | 143.546 | 141.820 | 140.486 | -2.1 | -2.1 | -0.9 |
| Nondurables less food & beverages..... | 180.618 | 177.597 | 175.142 | -3.4 | -3.0 | -1.4 |
| Nondurables less food, beverages, and apparel..... | 222.666 | 219.207 | 217.157 | -4.3 | -2.5 | -0.9 |
| Durables..... | 109.252 | 108.704 | 108.388 | -0.2 | -0.8 | -0.3 |
| Services..... | 303.877 | 304.128 | 304.636 | 3.3 | 0.2 | 0.2 |
| Rent of shelter ⁽²⁾ | 310.015 | 310.884 | 312.178 | 4.4 | 0.7 | 0.4 |
| Transportation services..... | 283.241 | 286.091 | 284.624 | 2.1 | 0.5 | -0.5 |

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods West (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

| Item and Group | Indexes | | | Percent change from- | | |
|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | Oct. 2015 | Nov. 2015 | Dec. 2015 | Dec. 2014 | Oct. 2015 | Nov. 2015 |
| Other services..... | 338.900 | 339.305 | 338.421 | 1.7 | -0.1 | -0.3 |
| Special aggregate indexes: | | | | | | |
| All items less medical care..... | 234.618 | 233.918 | 233.571 | 1.7 | -0.4 | -0.1 |
| All items less food..... | 243.213 | 242.648 | 242.386 | 1.9 | -0.3 | -0.1 |
| All items less shelter..... | 226.489 | 225.289 | 224.322 | 0.4 | -1.0 | -0.4 |
| Commodities less food..... | 147.405 | 145.727 | 144.404 | -2.0 | -2.0 | -0.9 |
| Nondurables..... | 216.464 | 214.504 | 212.867 | -1.0 | -1.7 | -0.8 |
| Nondurables less food..... | 185.433 | 182.593 | 180.233 | -3.1 | -2.8 | -1.3 |
| Nondurables less food and apparel..... | 224.525 | 221.429 | 219.512 | -3.8 | -2.2 | -0.9 |
| Services less rent of shelter ⁽²⁾ | 330.462 | 329.931 | 329.466 | 2.0 | -0.3 | -0.1 |
| Services less medical care services..... | 290.741 | 290.890 | 291.366 | 3.4 | 0.2 | 0.2 |
| Energy..... | 230.777 | 220.716 | 217.214 | -6.8 | -5.9 | -1.6 |
| All items less energy..... | 247.346 | 247.467 | 247.391 | 2.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| All items less food and energy..... | 247.185 | 247.460 | 247.485 | 2.7 | 0.1 | 0.0 |
| Commodities less food and energy commodities..... | 140.428 | 139.613 | 138.860 | -0.1 | -1.1 | -0.5 |
| Energy commodities..... | 218.688 | 209.693 | 203.507 | -11.4 | -6.9 | -3.0 |
| Services less energy services..... | 308.219 | 309.218 | 309.766 | 3.6 | 0.5 | 0.2 |

⁽¹⁾ This index series was calculated using a Laspeyres estimator. All other item stratum index series were calculated using a geometric means estimator.

⁽²⁾ Index is on a December 1982=100 base.

⁽³⁾ Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

⁽⁴⁾ Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

⁽⁵⁾ Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.

Regions defined as the four Census regions. West includes Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

NOTE: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date. Data not seasonally adjusted.